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Online  
ISSN 1440-9828



September 2012 No 642

[UNDERSTANDING USA's "War on Terror" requires an understanding of the mindset that set up US concentration camps – ed. AI.]

## Japanese American internment

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



### Internment camps and further institutions of the War Relocation Authority in the western United States.

**Japanese-American internment** was the relocation and internment by the United States government in 1942 of about 110,000 Japanese Americans and Japanese who lived along the Pacific coast of the United States to camps called "War Relocation Camps," in the wake of Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>[1][2]</sup> The internment of Japanese Americans was applied unequally throughout the United States. All who lived on the West Coast of the United States were interned, while in Hawaii, where the 150,000-plus Japanese Americans composed over one-third of the

population, an estimated 1,200<sup>[3]</sup> to 1,800 were interned.<sup>[4]</sup> Of those interned, 62% were American citizens.<sup>[5][6]</sup> President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the internment with Executive Order 9066, issued February 19, 1942, which allowed local military commanders to designate "military areas" as "exclusion zones," from which "any or all persons may be excluded." This power was used to declare that all people of Japanese ancestry were excluded from the entire Pacific coast, including all of California and much of Oregon, Washington and Arizona, except for those in internment camps.<sup>[7]</sup> In 1944, the Supreme Court upheld the

constitutionality of the exclusion orders,<sup>[8]</sup> while noting that the provisions that singled out people of Japanese ancestry were a separate issue outside the scope of the proceedings.<sup>[9]</sup> The [United States Census Bureau](#) assisted the internment efforts by providing confidential neighborhood information on Japanese Americans. The Bureau's role was denied for decades, but was finally proven in 2007.<sup>[10][11]</sup> In 1988, [Congress](#) passed and [President Ronald Reagan](#) signed legislation which apologized for the internment on behalf of the [U.S. government](#). The legislation said that government actions were based on "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership".<sup>[12]</sup> The U.S. government eventually disbursed more than \$1.6 billion in [reparations](#) to Japanese Americans who had been interned and their heirs.<sup>[13]</sup>

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[\[edit\]](#) Historical context

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In the first half of the 20th century, California experienced a wave of anti-Japanese prejudice, in part because of the concentration of new immigrants. This was distinct from the [Japanese American](#) experience in the broader United States. Over 90% of Japanese immigrants to the USA settled in California, where labor and farm competition fed into general anti-Japanese sentiment.<sup>[14]</sup> In 1905, California's anti-[miscegenation](#) law outlawed marriages between Caucasians and "[Mongolians](#)", an umbrella term that was used to refer to the Japanese and other ethnicities of East Asian ancestry.<sup>[14]</sup> In October 1906, the San Francisco Board of Education separated Japanese students from Caucasian students. It ordered 93 Japanese students in the district to attend a segregated school in Chinatown.<sup>[15]</sup> Twenty-five of the students were American citizens. In 1924, the "[Oriental](#)

[Exclusion Law](#)" blocked Japanese immigrants from attaining citizenship.<sup>[14]</sup>

In 1939 through 1941, the [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#) (FBI) compiled the [Custodial Detention Index](#) (CDI) on citizens, enemy aliens and foreign nationals, citing national security. On June 28, 1940, the [Alien Registration Act](#) was passed. Among many other loyalty regulations, Section 31 required the registration and fingerprinting of all aliens older than 14, and Section 35 required aliens to report any change of address within five days. In the subsequent months, nearly five million foreign nationals registered at post offices around the country.<sup>[16][17]</sup>

Of 127,000 Japanese Americans living in the continental United States at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, 112,000 resided on the West Coast.<sup>[18]</sup> About 80,000 were *nisei* (literal translation: "second age"; Japanese people born in the United States and holding American citizenship) and *sansei* (literal translation: "third age"; the sons or daughters of *nisei*). The rest were *issei* (literal translation: "first age"; immigrants born in Japan who were ineligible for U.S. citizenship).<sup>[19]</sup>

[[edit](#)]After Pearl Harbor



**San Francisco Examiner, February 1942.**



**A Japanese American unfurled this banner the day after the Pearl Harbor attack. This [Dorothea Lange](#) photograph was taken in March 1942, just prior to the man's internment.**



**Children at the Weill public school in San Francisco [pledge allegiance](#) to the [American flag](#) in April 1942, prior to the internment of Japanese Americans.**



**Taken by [Russell Lee](#), this photograph is labeled "Tagged for evacuation, [Salinas, California](#), May 1942".**

The [attack on Pearl Harbor](#) on December 7, 1941 led military and political leaders to suspect that [Imperial Japan](#) was preparing a full-scale attack on the West Coast of the United States. Japan's [rapid military conquest](#) of a large portion of Asia and the Pacific between 1936 and 1942 made its military forces seem unstoppable to some Americans. Civilian and military officials had serious concerns about the loyalty of the ethnic Japanese after the [Niihau Incident](#) which immediately followed the attack on Pearl Harbor, when a civilian Japanese national and two Hawaiian-born ethnic Japanese on the island of Ni'ihau violently freed a downed and captured Japanese naval airman, attacking their fellow Ni'ihau islanders in the process.

Several concerns over the loyalty of ethnic Japanese seemed to stem from [racial prejudice](#) rather than evidence of actual

malfeasance. Major [Karl Bendetsen](#) and Lieutenant General [John L. DeWitt](#), head of the Western Command, each questioned Japanese American loyalty. DeWitt, who administered the internment program, repeatedly told newspapers that "A Jap's a Jap" and testified to Congress, I don't want any of them [persons of Japanese ancestry] here. They are a dangerous element. There is no way to determine their loyalty... It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen, he is still a Japanese. American citizenship does not necessarily determine loyalty... But we must worry about the Japanese all the time until he is wiped off the map.<sup>[20][21]</sup>

DeWitt also sought approval to conduct search and seizure operations aimed at preventing alien Japanese from making radio transmissions to Japanese ships.<sup>[22]</sup> The Justice Department declined, stating that there was no [probable cause](#) to support DeWitt's assertion, as the FBI concluded that there was no security threat.<sup>[22]</sup> On January 2, the Joint Immigration Committee of the California Legislature sent a manifesto to California newspapers which attacked "the ethnic Japanese," who it alleged were "totally unassimilable."<sup>[22]</sup> This manifesto further argued that all people of Japanese heritage were loyal subjects of the [Emperor of Japan](#); Japanese language schools, furthermore, according to the manifesto, were bastions of racism which advanced doctrines of Japanese racial superiority.<sup>[22]</sup>

The manifesto was backed by the [Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West](#) and the California Department of the [American Legion](#), which in January demanded that all Japanese with [dual citizenship](#) be placed in concentration camps.<sup>[22]</sup> Internment was not limited to those who had been to Japan, but included a small number of German and Italian enemy aliens.<sup>[22]</sup> By February, [Earl Warren](#), the [Attorney General of California](#), had begun his efforts to persuade the federal government to remove all people of Japanese heritage from the West Coast.<sup>[22]</sup>

Those that were as little as 1/16 Japanese could be placed in internment camps.<sup>[23]</sup> There is evidence supporting the argument that the measures were racially motivated, rather than a military necessity. For example, orphaned infants with

"one drop of Japanese blood" (as explained in a letter by one official) were included in the program.

Upon the bombing of Pearl Harbor and pursuant to the [Alien Enemies Act](#), Presidential Proclamations 2525, 2526 and 2527 were issued designating Japanese, German and Italian nationals as enemy aliens.<sup>[24]</sup> Information from the CDI was used to locate and incarcerate foreign nationals from Japan, Germany and Italy (although Germany and Italy did not declare war on the U.S. until December 11).

Presidential Proclamation 2537 was issued on January 14, 1942, requiring aliens to report any change of address, employment or name to the FBI. Enemy aliens were not allowed to enter restricted areas. Violators of these regulations were subject to "arrest, detention and internment for the duration of the war."

#### [\[edit\]](#) **Executive Order 9066 and related actions**

Executive Order 9066, signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, allowed authorized military commanders to designate "military areas" at their discretion, "from which any or all persons may be excluded." These "exclusion zones," unlike the "alien enemy" roundups, were applicable to anyone that an authorized military commander might choose, whether citizen or non-citizen. Eventually such zones would include parts of both the East and West Coasts, totaling about 1/3 of the country by area. Unlike the subsequent detainment and internment programs that would come to be applied to large numbers of Japanese Americans, detentions and restrictions directly under this Individual Exclusion Program were placed primarily on individuals of German or Italian ancestry, including American citizens.<sup>[25]</sup>

March 2, 1942: General [John L. DeWitt](#) issued Public Proclamation No. 1, declaring that "such person or classes of persons as the situation may require" would, at some later point, be subject to exclusion orders from "Military Area No. 1" (essentially, the entire Pacific coast to about 100 miles (160.9 km) inland), and requiring anyone who had "enemy" ancestry to file a Change of Residence Notice if they planned to move.<sup>[2]</sup> A second exclusion zone was designated several months later, which included the areas chosen by most of the Japanese Americans who had managed to leave the first zone.

March 11, 1942: Executive Order 9095 created the Office of the Alien Property Custodian, and gave it discretionary, plenary authority over all alien property interests. Many assets were frozen, creating immediate financial difficulty for the affected aliens, preventing most from moving out of the exclusion zones.<sup>[7]</sup>

March 24, 1942: Public Proclamation No. 3 declares an 8:00 pm to 6:00 am curfew for "all enemy aliens and all persons of Japanese ancestry" within the military areas.<sup>[26]</sup>

March 24, 1942: General DeWitt began to issue Civilian Exclusion Orders for specific areas within "Military Area No. 1."<sup>[26]</sup> Japanese Americans on [Bainbridge Island](#), Washington were the first in the country to be subject to such an order, due to the island's proximity to naval bases; they were given until March 30 to prepare themselves for removal from the island, an event commemorated by the [Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial](#).<sup>[27][28]</sup>

March 27, 1942: General DeWitt's Proclamation No. 4 prohibited all those of Japanese ancestry from leaving "Military Area No. 1" for "any purpose until and to the extent that a future proclamation or order of this headquarters shall so permit or direct."<sup>[7]</sup>

May 3, 1942: General DeWitt issued Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34, ordering all people of Japanese ancestry, whether citizens or non-citizens, who were still living in "Military Area No. 1" to report to assembly centers, where they would live until being moved to permanent "Relocation Centers."<sup>[7]</sup>

These edicts included persons of part-Japanese ancestry as well. Anyone with at least one-sixteenth Japanese ancestry was eligible.<sup>[29]</sup> Korean-Americans and Taiwanese,<sup>[citation needed]</sup> considered to have Japanese nationality (since Korea and Taiwan were both Japanese colonies), were also included.

**[edit]**Non-military advocates for exclusion, removal, and detention

Internment was popular among many white farmers who resented the Japanese-American farmers. "White American farmers admitted that their self-interest required removal of the Japanese."<sup>[22]</sup> These individuals saw internment as a convenient means of uprooting their Japanese-American competitors. Austin E. Anson, managing secretary of the

Salinas Vegetable Grower-Shipper Association, told the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1942:

"We're charged with wanting to get rid of the Japs for selfish reasons. We do. It's a question of whether the white man lives on the Pacific Coast or the brown men. They came into this valley to work, and they stayed to take over... If all the Japs were removed tomorrow, we'd never miss them in two weeks, because the white farmers can take over and produce everything the Jap grows. And we do not want them back when the war ends, either."<sup>[30]</sup>

The Roberts Commission Report, prepared at President Franklin D. Roosevelt's request, has been cited as an example of the fear and prejudice informing the thinking behind the internment program.<sup>[22]</sup> The Report sought to link Japanese Americans with espionage activity, and to associate them with the bombing of Pearl Harbor.<sup>[22]</sup> Columnist Henry McLemore reflected growing public sentiment fueled by this report:

"I am for the immediate removal of every Japanese on the West Coast to a point deep in the interior. I don't mean a nice part of the interior either. Herd 'em up, pack 'em off and give 'em the inside room in the badlands... Personally, I hate the Japanese. And that goes for all of them."<sup>[31]</sup>

Other California newspapers also embraced this view. According to a [Los Angeles Times](#) editorial,

"A viper is nonetheless a viper wherever the egg is hatched.... So, a Japanese American born of Japanese parents, nurtured upon Japanese traditions, living in a transplanted Japanese atmosphere... notwithstanding his nominal brand of accidental citizenship almost inevitably and with the rarest exceptions grows up to be a Japanese, and not an American.... Thus, while it might cause injustice to a few to treat them all as potential enemies, I cannot escape the conclusion... that such treatment... should be accorded to each and all of them while we are at war with their race."<sup>[32]</sup>

State politicians joined the bandwagon that was embraced by Leland Ford of Los Angeles, who demanded that "all Japanese, whether citizens or not, be placed in [inland] concentration camps."<sup>[22]</sup> Internment of Japanese Americans, who provided critical agricultural labor on the West Coast, created a labor shortage, which was exacerbated by the induction of many



[\[edit\]](#)Statement of military necessity as justification for internment



[\[edit\]](#)**Niihau Incident**

[[edit](#)] **Cryptography**

In *Magic: The Untold Story of US Intelligence and the Evacuation of Japanese Residents From the West Coast During World War II*, [David Lowman](#), a former [National Security Agency](#) (NSA) operative, argues that [Magic intercepts](#) ("Magic" was the code-name for American code-breaking efforts) posed "the frightening specter of massive espionage nets," thus justifying internment.<sup>[35]</sup> Lowman contended that internment served to ensure the secrecy of US code-breaking efforts, because effective prosecution of Japanese Americans might necessitate disclosure of secret information. If US code-breaking technology was revealed in the context of trials of individual spies, the Japanese Imperial Navy would change its codes, thus undermining US strategic wartime advantage.

The controversial conclusions drawn by Lowman were defended by pundit [Michelle Malkin](#) in her book [\*In Defense of Internment: The Case for 'Racial Profiling' in World War II and the War on Terror\*](#).<sup>[41]</sup> Malkin's defense of Japanese internment was in part the result of what she describes as the "constant alarmism from Bush-bashers who argue that every counter-terror measure in America is tantamount to the internment".<sup>[42]</sup> The text was critical of academia's treatment of the subject, and suggested that academics critical of Japanese internment had ulterior motives. She received much criticism for her text, particularly in regards to her reading of the "Magic" cables.<sup>[43][44][45]</sup> [Daniel Pipes](#), also drawing on Lowman, has defended Malkin's stance, and asserted that Japanese American internment was "a good idea" which offers "lessons for today".<sup>[46]</sup>

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY  
WARRETIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION  
Proclamation of War Relocation Authority  
April 1, 1942.

**INSTRUCTIONS  
TO ALL PERSONS OF  
JAPANESE  
ANCESTRY**

Living in the Relocating Area

1. Persons of Japanese ancestry who are permitted to live in the Relocating Area must comply with the following instructions:

(a) Persons of Japanese ancestry who are permitted to live in the Relocating Area must comply with the following instructions:

(1) Curfew. Persons of Japanese ancestry must observe a curfew of 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on all days of the week.

(2) Travel. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a travel permit from the War Relocation Authority before leaving the Relocating Area.

(3) Employment. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a work permit from the War Relocation Authority before accepting employment outside the Relocating Area.

(4) Education. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a school permit from the War Relocation Authority before enrolling in school outside the Relocating Area.

(5) Marriage. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a marriage permit from the War Relocation Authority before marrying outside the Relocating Area.

(6) Property. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a property permit from the War Relocation Authority before disposing of property outside the Relocating Area.

(7) Firearms. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not possess, use, or transport firearms or explosives without a permit from the War Relocation Authority.

(8) Gambling. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not engage in gambling activities.

(9) Intoxicants. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not consume or possess intoxicants.

(10) Public Places. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not loiter in public places.

(11) Identification. Persons of Japanese ancestry must carry a valid identification card at all times.

(12) Compliance. Persons of Japanese ancestry must comply with all other instructions issued by the War Relocation Authority.

These instructions are issued for the purpose of maintaining the security and order of the Relocating Area and are intended to be strictly enforced.

Proclamation of War Relocation Authority  
April 1, 1942.

**NOT**

Headquarters  
Western Defense  
and Foreign

Proclamation of War Relocation Authority  
April 1, 1942.

**Civilian Exclusion**

1. Persons of Japanese ancestry who are permitted to live in the Relocating Area must comply with the following instructions:

(a) Persons of Japanese ancestry who are permitted to live in the Relocating Area must comply with the following instructions:

(1) Curfew. Persons of Japanese ancestry must observe a curfew of 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on all days of the week.

(2) Travel. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a travel permit from the War Relocation Authority before leaving the Relocating Area.

(3) Employment. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a work permit from the War Relocation Authority before accepting employment outside the Relocating Area.

(4) Education. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a school permit from the War Relocation Authority before enrolling in school outside the Relocating Area.

(5) Marriage. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a marriage permit from the War Relocation Authority before marrying outside the Relocating Area.

(6) Property. Persons of Japanese ancestry must obtain a property permit from the War Relocation Authority before disposing of property outside the Relocating Area.

(7) Firearms. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not possess, use, or transport firearms or explosives without a permit from the War Relocation Authority.

(8) Gambling. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not engage in gambling activities.

(9) Intoxicants. Persons of Japanese ancestry must not consume or possess intoxicants.

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These instructions are issued for the purpose of maintaining the security and order of the Relocating Area and are intended to be strictly enforced.

Proclamation of War Relocation Authority  
April 1, 1942.

A report by [General DeWitt](#) and [Colonel Bendetsen](#) depicting racist bias against Japanese Americans was circulated and then hastily redacted in 1943–1944. The report stated flatly that, because of their race, it was impossible to determine the loyalty of Japanese Americans, thus necessitating internment.<sup>[47]</sup> The original version was so offensive – even in

the atmosphere of the wartime 1940s – that Bendetsen ordered all copies to be destroyed.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

In 1980, a copy of the original *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast – 1942* was found in the [National Archives](#), along with notes showing the numerous differences between the original and redacted versions.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> This earlier, racist and inflammatory version, as well as the FBI and [Office of Naval Intelligence](#) (ONI) reports, led to the *coram nobis* retrials which overturned the convictions of [Fred Korematsu](#), [Gordon Hirabayashi](#) and [Minoru Yasui](#) on all charges related to their refusal to submit to exclusion and internment.<sup>[48]</sup> The courts found that the government had intentionally withheld these reports and other critical evidence, at trials all the way up to the [Supreme Court](#), which would have proved that there was no military necessity for the exclusion and internment of Japanese Americans. In the words of [Department of Justice](#) officials writing during the war, the justifications were based on "willful historical inaccuracies and intentional falsehoods."

#### [\[edit\]](#) The Ringle Report

In May 2011, U.S. Solicitor General [Neal Katyal](#), after a year of investigation, found [Charles Fahy](#) intentionally withheld *The Ringle Report*, drafted by the Office of Naval Intelligence, in order to justify the Roosevelt administration in the cases of [Hirabayashi v. United States](#) and [Korematsu v. United States](#). The report would have undermined the administration's position of the military necessity for such action, finding most Japanese-Americans were not a national security threat, along with allegations of communication espionage being unfounded by the FBI and [Federal Communications Commission](#).<sup>[49][50]</sup>

#### [\[edit\]](#) Facilities



**"Members of the Mochida family awaiting evacuation bus. Identification tags are used to aid in keeping the family unit intact during all phases of evacuation. Mochida operated a nursery and five greenhouses on a**

**two-acre site in Eden Township. He raised snapdragons and sweet peas."**

While this event is most commonly called the *internment* of Japanese Americans, in fact there were several different types of camps involved. The best known facilities were the *Assembly Centers* run by the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA), and the *Relocation Centers* run by the [War Relocation Authority](#) (WRA), which are generally (but unofficially) referred to as "internment camps." The [Department of Justice](#) (DOJ) operated camps officially called *Internment Camps*, which were used to detain those suspected of actual crimes or "enemy sympathies." [German American internment](#) and [Italian American internment](#) camps also existed, sometimes sharing facilities with the Japanese Americans. The WCCA and WRA facilities were the largest and the most public. The WCCA Assembly Centers were temporary facilities that were first set up in horse racing tracks, fairgrounds and other large public meeting places to assemble and organize internees before they were transported to WRA Relocation Centers by truck, bus or train. The WRA Relocation Centers were camps that housed persons removed from the exclusion zone after March 1942, or until they were able to relocate elsewhere in America outside the exclusion zone.

#### [\[edit\]](#) DOJ Internment Camps

During World War II, over 7,000 Japanese Americans and Japanese from Latin America were held in internment camps run by the [Immigration and Naturalization Service](#), part of the Department of Justice. In this period, Latin Americans of Japanese ancestry were rounded up and transported to American internment camps run by the U.S. Justice Department.<sup>[51][52][53]</sup> These Latin American internees were eventually, through the efforts of civil rights attorney [Wayne M. Collins](#),<sup>[54][55]</sup> offered "[parole](#)" relocation to the labor-starved farming community in [Seabrook, New Jersey](#).<sup>[56]</sup> Many became naturalized American citizens or Japanese Americans after the war.



Friends say good-bye as family of Japanese ancestry await evacuation bus. Hayward, California, 8 May 1942

There were twenty-seven U.S. Department of Justice Camps, eight of which (in Texas, [Idaho](#), [North Dakota](#), [New Mexico](#), and [Montana](#)) held Japanese Americans. The camps were guarded by [Border Patrol](#) agents rather than military police and were intended for non-citizens including [Buddhist](#) ministers, Japanese language instructors, newspaper workers, and other community leaders.

In addition 2,264 persons of Japanese ancestry<sup>[52]</sup> taken from 12 Latin American countries by the U.S. State and Justice Departments were held at the Department of Justice Camps.<sup>[57]</sup> About two-thirds of these persons were Japanese Peruvians.<sup>[52]</sup> There has been some speculation that the United States intended to use them in hostage exchanges with Japan,<sup>[58]</sup> a plot in part facilitated by local prejudice against Japanese communities in various South American countries.<sup>[52]</sup> After the war, Peru refused to accept the return of the Japanese Peruvians they had acquiesced to interning in American camps; of this group, some were transferred to Japan, some were granted American citizenship, and a small minority of about 100 managed to achieve repatriation into Peru by asserting special circumstances, such as marriage to a non-Japanese Peruvian.<sup>[52]</sup> Three hundred of the Japanese Peruvians who fought deportation in the courts were allowed to settle in the United States, and were granted American citizenship in 1953.<sup>[52]</sup>

#### [\[edit\]](#) **WCCA Civilian Assembly Centers**

Executive Order 9066 authorized the evacuation of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast; it was signed when there was no place for the Japanese Americans to go. When voluntary evacuation proved impractical, the military took over full responsibility for the evacuation; on April 9, 1942, the Wartime Civilian Control Agency (WCCA) was established by the military to coordinate the evacuation to inland relocation centers. The relocation centers were far from ready for large influxes of people. For some, there was still contention over the location, but for most, their placement in "isolated" undeveloped areas of the country exacerbated problems of building infrastructure and housing. Since the Japanese Americans living in the restricted zone were considered too dangerous to freely conduct their daily business, the military

decided it was necessary to find temporary "assembly centers" to house the evacuees until the relocation centers were completed.<sup>[59]</sup>

#### **WRA Relocation Centers**<sup>[60]</sup>

Name	State	Opened	Max. Pop'n
<a href="#">Manzanar</a>	California	March 1942	10,046
<a href="#">Tule Lake</a>	California	May 1942	18,789
<a href="#">Poston</a>	Arizona	May 1942	17,814
<a href="#">Gila River</a>	Arizona	July 1942	13,348
<a href="#">Granada</a>	Colorado	August 1942	7,318
<a href="#">Heart Mountain</a>	Wyoming	August 1942	10,767
<a href="#">Minidoka</a>	Idaho	August 1942	9,397
<a href="#">Topaz</a>	Utah	September 1942	8,130
<a href="#">Rohwer</a>	Arkansas	September 1942	8,475
<a href="#">Jerome</a>	Arkansas	October 1942	8,497

#### [\[edit\]](#) **WRA Relocation Centers**

The [War Relocation Authority](#) (WRA) was the U.S. civilian agency responsible for the relocation and detention. The WRA was created by President Roosevelt on March 18, 1942 with [Executive Order 9102](#) and officially ceased to exist June 30, 1946. [Milton S. Eisenhower](#), then an official of the Department of Agriculture, was chosen to head the WRA. Dillon S. Myer replaced Milton Eisenhower on June 17, 1942, three months after Milton took control. Myer served as Director of the WRA until the centers were closed.<sup>[61]</sup> Within nine months, the WRA had opened ten facilities in seven states, and transferred over 100,000 people from the WCCA facilities.

The WRA camp at [Tule Lake](#), though initially like the other camps, eventually became a detention center for people believed to pose a security risk. Tule Lake also served as a "segregation center" for individuals and families who were deemed "disloyal" and for those who were to be deported to Japan.

#### [\[edit\]](#) **List of camps**

There were three types of camps. *Civilian Assembly Centers* were temporary camps, frequently located at horse tracks, where the Nisei were sent as they were removed from their communities. Eventually, most were sent to *Relocation Centers*, also known as *internment camps*. *Detention*



*camps* housed Nikkei considered to be disruptive or of special interest to the government.

#### [\[edit\]](#)**Civilian Assembly Centers**

[Arcadia, California](#) ([Santa Anita Racetrack](#), stables) ▪  
[Fresno, California](#) ([Big Fresno Fairgrounds](#), racetrack, stables) ▪  
[Marysville / Arboga, California](#) (migrant workers' camp) ▪  
[Mayer, Arizona](#) ([Civilian Conservation Corps](#) camp) ▪  
[Merced, California](#) (county fairgrounds)  
[Eleanor Roosevelt](#) at the Gila River Relocation Center, April 23, 1943

[Owens Valley, California](#)

[Parker Dam, Arizona](#)

[Pinedale, California](#) ([Pinedale Assembly Center](#), warehouses)

[Pomona, California](#) ([Los Angeles County Fairgrounds](#), racetrack, stables)

[Portland, Oregon](#) ([Pacific International Livestock Exposition](#), including 3,800 housed in the main pavilion building) ▪

[Puyallup, Washington](#) (fairgrounds racetrack stables) ▪  
Informally known as "[Camp Harmony](#)") ▪

[Sacramento, California](#) / (Site of Present-Day Walerga Park) (migrant workers' camp)

[Salinas, California](#) ([fairgrounds](#), racetrack, stables)

[San Bruno, California](#) ([Tanforan](#) racetrack, stables)

[Stockton, California](#) (San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, racetrack, stables)

[Tulare, California](#) (fairgrounds, racetrack, stables)

[Turlock, California](#) (Stanislaus County Fairgrounds)

[Woodland, California](#)

Heart Mountain Relocation Center, January 10, 1943

#### [\[edit\]](#)**Relocation Centers**

[Gila River War Relocation Center](#), Arizona

[Granada War Relocation Center](#), Colorado (AKA "Amache")

[Heart Mountain War Relocation Center](#), Wyoming

[Jerome War Relocation Center](#), Arkansas

[Manzanar War Relocation Center](#), California

[Minidoka War Relocation Center](#), Idaho

[Poston War Relocation Center](#), Arizona

[Rohwer War Relocation Center](#), Arkansas

[Topaz War Relocation Center](#), Utah

[Tule Lake War Relocation Center](#), California

#### [\[edit\]](#)**Justice Department detention camps**

These camps often held German and Italian detainees in addition to Japanese Americans:<sup>[62]</sup>

[Crystal City, Texas](#)<sup>[63]</sup>

[Fort Lincoln Internment Camp](#)

[Fort Missoula, Montana](#)

[Fort Stanton, New Mexico](#)



**Harvesting spinach. Tule Lake Relocation Center, September 8, 1942**

[Kenedy, Texas](#)

[Kooskia, Idaho](#)

[Santa Fe, New Mexico](#)

[Seagoville, Texas](#)

#### [\[edit\]](#)**Citizen Isolation Centers**

The Citizen Isolation Centers were for those considered to be problem inmates.<sup>[62]</sup>

[Leupp, Arizona](#)

[Moab, Utah](#) (AKA Dalton Wells)

[Fort Stanton, New Mexico](#) (AKA Old Raton Ranch)

#### [\[edit\]](#)**Federal Bureau of Prisons**

Detainees convicted of crimes, usually draft resistance, were sent to these camps:<sup>[62]</sup>

[Catalina, Arizona](#)

[Fort Leavenworth, Kansas](#)

[McNeill Island, Washington](#)

#### [\[edit\]](#)**US Army facilities**

These camps often held German and Italian detainees in addition to Japanese Americans:<sup>[62]</sup>

[Angel Island, California](#)/[Fort McDowell](#)

[Camp Blanding, Florida](#)

[Camp Forrest](#)

[Camp Livingston](#), Louisiana

[Camp Lordsburg, New Mexico](#)

[Camp McCoy, Wisconsin](#)

[Florence, Arizona](#)

[Fort Bliss](#)

[Fort Howard](#)

[Fort Lewis](#)

[Fort Meade, Maryland](#)

[Fort Richardson](#)

[Fort Sam Houston](#)

[Fort Sill, Oklahoma](#)

[Griffith Park](#)

[Honolulu, Hawaii](#)

[Sand Island, Hawaii](#)

[Stringtown, Oklahoma](#)

[[edit](#)]Exclusion, removal, and detention



Field laborers of Japanese ancestry stand in front of a Wartime Civil Control Administration site, where they are seeking instruction in regards to their "evacuation".

Somewhere between 110,000 and 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry were subject to this mass exclusion program, of whom about two-thirds were U.S. citizens.<sup>[2]</sup> The remaining one-third were non-citizens subject to internment under the [Alien Enemies Act](#); many of these "resident aliens" had long been inhabitants of the United States, but had been deprived the opportunity to attain citizenship by laws that blocked Asian-born nationals from ever achieving citizenship.

Internees of Japanese descent were first sent to one of 17 temporary "Civilian Assembly Centers," where most awaited transfer to more permanent relocation centers being constructed by the newly formed [War Relocation Authority](#) (WRA). Some of those who did report to the civilian assembly centers were not sent to relocation centers, but were released under the condition that they remain outside the prohibited zone until the military orders were modified or lifted. Almost 120,000<sup>[2]</sup> Japanese Americans and resident Japanese aliens would eventually be removed from their homes in California, the western halves of [Oregon](#) and [Washington](#) and southern [Arizona](#) as part of the single largest forced relocation in [U.S. history](#).

Most of these camps/residences, gardens, and stock areas were placed on Native American reservations, for which the Native Americans were formally compensated. The Native American councils disputed the amounts negotiated in absentia by US government authorities and later sued finding relief and additional compensation for some items of dispute.<sup>[64]</sup>

Under the National Student Council Relocation Program (supported primarily by the [American Friends Service Committee](#)), students of college age were permitted to leave the camps to attend institutions willing to accept students of Japanese ancestry. Although the program initially granted leave permits to only a very small number of students, this eventually grew to 2,263 students by December 31, 1943.<sup>[65]</sup>



**The baggage of Japanese Americans from the west coast, at a makeshift reception center located at a racetrack.**

An evacuee with family belongings en route to an "assembly center", Spring 1942

[[edit](#)]**Curfew and exclusion**

The exclusion from Military Area No. 1 initially occurred through a voluntary relocation policy. Under the voluntary relocation policy, the Japanese Americans were free to go anywhere outside of the exclusion zone; the arrangements and costs of relocation were borne by the individuals. The night-time curfew, initiated on March 27, 1942, was the first mass-action restricting the Japanese Americans.<sup>[[citation needed](#)]</sup>

[[edit](#)]**Conditions in the camps**

According to a 1943 [War Relocation Authority](#) report, internees were housed in "tar paper-covered barracks of simple frame construction without plumbing or cooking facilities of any kind." The spartan facilities met international laws, but still left much to be desired. Many camps were built quickly by civilian

contractors during the summer of 1942 based on designs for military barracks, making the buildings poorly equipped for cramped family living.

Dust storm at [Manzanar](#) War Relocation Center.



**A baseball game at Manzanar. Picture by [Ansel Adams](#) c. 1943.**

To describe the conditions in more detail, the [Heart Mountain War Relocation Center](#) in northwestern [Wyoming](#) was a barbed-wire-surrounded enclave with unpartitioned toilets, cots for beds, and a budget of 45 cents daily per capita for food rations.<sup>[66]</sup> Because most internees were evacuated from their West Coast homes on short notice and not told of their assigned destinations, many failed to pack appropriate clothing for Wyoming winters which often reached temperatures below zero Fahrenheit. Many families were forced to simply take the "clothes on their backs."<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

Armed guards were posted at the camps, which were all in remote, desolate areas far from population centers. Internees were typically allowed to stay with their families, and were treated well unless they violated the rules. There are documented instances of guards shooting internees who reportedly attempted to walk outside the fences. One such shooting, that of James Wakasa at Topaz, led to a re-evaluation of the security measures in the camps. Some camp administrations eventually allowed relatively free movement outside the marked boundaries of the camps. Nearly a quarter of the internees left the camps to live and work elsewhere in the United States, outside the exclusion zone. Eventually, some were authorized to return to their hometowns in the exclusion zone under supervision of a sponsoring American family or agency whose loyalty had been assured.<sup>[67]</sup>

The phrase "[shikata ga nai](#)" (loosely translated as "it cannot be helped") was commonly used to summarize the interned

families' resignation to their helplessness throughout these conditions. This was even noticed by the children, as mentioned in the well-known memoir [Farewell to Manzanar](#).

#### **[edit]Loyalty questions and segregation**

Some Japanese Americans did question the American government, after finding themselves in internment camps. Several pro-Japan groups formed inside the camps, particularly at the Tule Lake location.<sup>[68]</sup> When the government passed a law that made it possible for an internee to [renounce American citizenship](#), 5,589 internees opted to do so; 5,461 of these were at Tule Lake.<sup>[68]</sup> Of those who renounced their citizenship, 1,327 were repatriated to Japan.<sup>[68]</sup> Many of these individuals would later face stigmatization in the Japanese-American community, after the war, for having made that choice, although even at the time they were not certain what their futures held were they to remain American, and remain interned.<sup>[68]</sup>

These renunciations of American citizenship have been highly controversial, for a number of reasons. Some apologists for internment have cited the renunciations as evidence that "disloyalty" or [anti-Americanism](#) was well-represented among the interned peoples, thereby justifying the internment.<sup>[69]</sup> Many historians have dismissed the latter argument, for its failure to consider that the small number of individuals in question were in the midst of persecution by their own government at the time of the "renunciation":<sup>[70][71]</sup>

[T]he renunciations had little to do with "loyalty" or "disloyalty" to the United States, but were instead the result of a series of complex conditions and factors that were beyond the control of those involved. Prior to discarding citizenship, most or all of the renunciants had experienced the following misfortunes: forced removal from homes; loss of jobs; government and public assumption of disloyalty to the land of their birth based on race alone; and incarceration in a "segregation center" for "disloyal" ISSEI or NISEI...<sup>[71]</sup>

Minoru Kiyota, who was among those who renounced his citizenship and swiftly came to regret the decision, has stated that he wanted only "to express my fury toward the government of the United States," for his internment and for

the mental and physical duress, as well as the intimidation, he was made to face.<sup>[72]</sup>

[M]y renunciation had been an expression of momentary emotional defiance in reaction to years of persecution suffered by myself and other Japanese Americans and, in particular, to the degrading interrogation by the FBI agent at [Topaz](#) and being terrorized by the guards and gangs at [Tule Lake](#).<sup>[73]</sup>

Civil rights attorney [Wayne M. Collins](#) successfully challenged most of these renunciations as invalid, owing to the conditions of duress and intimidation under which the government obtained them.<sup>[72][74]</sup> Many of the deportees were [Issei](#) (first generation Japanese immigrants) who often had difficulty with English and often did not understand the questions they were asked.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Even among those *Issei* who had a clear understanding, Question 28 posed an awkward dilemma: Japanese immigrants were denied US citizenship at the time, so when asked to renounce their Japanese citizenship, answering "Yes" would have made them [stateless persons](#).<sup>[75]</sup>

When the government circulated a questionnaire seeking army volunteers from among the internees, 6% of military-aged male respondents volunteered to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Most of those who refused tempered that refusal with statements of willingness to fight if they were restored their rights as American citizens. 20,000 Japanese American men and many Japanese American women served in the U.S. Army during World War II.<sup>[76]</sup>



**The [442nd Regimental Combat Team](#), which was composed primarily of [Japanese Americans](#), served with uncommon distinction in the [European theatre of World War II](#). Many of the US soldiers serving in the unit had their families interned at home while they fought abroad.**

The famed [442nd Regimental Combat Team](#), which [fought in Europe](#), was formed from those Japanese Americans who did

agree to serve. This unit was the most highly decorated US military unit of its size and duration.<sup>[77]</sup> Most notably, the 442nd was known for saving the [141st \(or the "lost battalion"\)](#) from the Germans. The 1951 film [Go For Broke!](#) was a fairly accurate portrayal of the 442nd, and starred several of the RCT's veterans.

#### **[\[edit\]](#)Other detention camps**

As early as 1939, when war broke out in Europe and while armed conflict began to rage in East Asia, the FBI and branches of the Department of Justice and the armed forces began to collect information and surveillance on influential members of the Japanese community in the United States. These data were included in the [Custodial Detention index](#)(CDI). Agents in the Department of Justice's Special Defense Unit classified the subjects into three groups: A, B and C, with A being "most dangerous," and C being "possibly dangerous."

After the Pearl Harbor attacks, Roosevelt authorized his attorney general to put into motion a plan for the arrest of individuals on the potential enemy alien lists. Armed with a blanket arrest warrant, the FBI seized these men on the eve of December 8, 1941. These men were held in municipal jails and prisons until they were moved to Department of Justice detention camps, separate from those of the Wartime Relocation Authority (WRA). These camps operated under far more stringent conditions and were subject to heightened criminal-style guard, despite the absence of criminal proceedings.

[Crystal City, Texas](#), was one such camp where Japanese Americans, German Americans, Italian Americans, and a large number of US-seized, Axis-descended nationals from several Latin-American countries were interned.<sup>[54][63]</sup>

[Canadian citizens with Japanese ancestry](#) were also interned by the Canadian government during World War II (see [Japanese Canadian internment](#)). Japanese people from various parts of Latin America, including Peru, were brought to the United States for internment or interned in their countries of residence,<sup>[54]</sup> and there were [varied restrictions](#) placed on [Japanese Brazilians](#).<sup>[78]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#)Hawaii

Although there was a strong push from mainland Congressmen (Hawaii was only a US territory at the time, and did not have a voting representative or senator in Congress) to remove and intern all [Japanese Americans](#) and Japanese immigrants in Hawaii, it never happened. 1,200 to 1,800 Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans from Hawaii were interned, either in five camps on the islands or in one of the mainland internment camps.<sup>[79]</sup>

The vast majority of Japanese Americans and their immigrant parents in Hawaii were not interned because the government had already declared [martial law](#) in Hawaii and this allowed it to significantly reduce the supposed risk of espionage and sabotage by residents of Japanese ancestry. Also, Japanese Americans comprised over 35% of the territory's population, with about 150,000 inhabitants; detaining so many people would have been enormously challenging in terms of logistics. Also, the whole of Hawaiian society was dependent on their productivity. Lieutenant General [Delos C. Emmons](#), commander of the Hawaii Department, promised the local Japanese-American community that they would be treated fairly so long as they remained loyal to the United States, and he succeeded in blocking efforts to relocate them to the outer islands or mainland by pointing out the logistical difficulties.<sup>[80]</sup> Among the small number interned were a number of community leaders and prominent politicians, including territorial legislators [Thomas Sakakihara](#) and [Sanji Abe](#).<sup>[81]</sup>

There were five internment camps in Hawaii, referred to as "Hawaiian Island Detention Camps".<sup>[82]</sup> One camp was located at [Sand Island](#) at the mouth of [Honolulu](#) Harbor. This camp was prepared in advance of the war's outbreak. All prisoners held here were "detained under military custody... because of the imposition of martial law throughout the Islands". Another Hawaiian camp was the [Honouliuli Internment Camp](#), near Ewa, on the southwestern shore of Oahu; it was opened in 1943 to replace the Sand Island camp. One was also located on the island of [Maui](#) in the town of [Haiku](#).<sup>[83]</sup> In total, five internment camps operated in Hawaii.<sup>[82][84]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#)Internment ends

On December 18, 1944, the [Supreme Court of the United States](#) clarified the legality of the exclusion process under Order 9066 by handing down two decisions. [Korematsu v. United States](#), a 6–3 decision, stated that the exclusion process in general was constitutional. *Ex parte Endo* unanimously declared that loyal citizens of the United States, regardless of cultural descent, could not be detained without cause.

On January 2, 1945, the exclusion order was rescinded entirely. The internees then began to leave the camps to rebuild their lives at home, although the relocation camps remained open for residents who were not ready to make the move back. The freed internees were given \$25 and a train ticket to their former homes. While the majority returned to their former lives, some of the Japanese Americans emigrated to Japan.<sup>[85]</sup> The last internment camp was not closed until 1946;<sup>[86]</sup> Japanese taken by the U.S. from Peru that were still being held in the camp in Santa Fe took legal action in April 1946 in an attempt to avoid deportation to Japan.<sup>[87]</sup>

One of the WRA camps, [Manzanar](#), was designated a [National Historic Site](#) in 1992 to "provide for the protection and interpretation of historic, cultural, and natural resources associated with the relocation of Japanese Americans during World War II" (Public Law 102-248). In 2001, the site of the Minidoka War Relocation Center in Idaho was designated the [Minidoka National Historic Site](#).

## [\[edit\]](#)Hardship and material loss

Graveyard at Granada Relocation Center, in Amache, Colorado.



**A monument at Manzanar, "to console the souls of the dead."** Many internees lost irreplaceable personal property due to the restrictions on what could be taken into the camps. These losses were compounded by theft and destruction of items placed in governmental storage. A number of persons died or suffered for lack of medical care, and several were



killed by sentries; James Wakasa, for instance, was killed at [Topaz War Relocation Center](#), near the perimeter wire. [Nikkei](#) were prohibited from leaving the Military Zones during the last few weeks before internment, and only able to leave the camps by permission of the camp administrators.

Psychological injury was observed by Dillon S. Myer, director of the WRA camps. In June 1945, Myer described how the Japanese Americans had grown increasingly depressed, and overcome with feelings of helplessness and personal insecurity.<sup>[88]</sup> Author Betty Furuta insists that the Japanese used [gaman](#), loosely meaning "perseverance", to overcome hardships which was mistaken by non-Japanese as being introverted and lacking initiative.<sup>[89]</sup>

Some Japanese-American farmers were able to find families willing to tend their farms for the duration of their internment. In other cases Japanese-American farmers had to sell their property in a matter of days, usually at great financial loss. In these cases, the land speculators who bought the land made huge profits. California's [Alien Land Laws](#) of the 1910s, which prohibited most non-citizens from owning property in that state, contributed to Japanese-American property losses. Because they were barred from owning land, many older Japanese-American farmers were [tenant farmers](#) and therefore lost their rights to those farm lands.

To compensate former internees for their property losses, the [US Congress](#), on July 2, 1948, passed the "American Japanese Claims Act," allowing Japanese Americans to apply for compensation for property losses which occurred as "a reasonable and natural consequence of the evacuation or exclusion." By the time the Act was passed, the [IRS](#) had already destroyed most of the 1939–42 tax records of the internees, and, due to the time pressure and the strict limits on how much they could take to the assembly centers and then the internment camps, few of the internees themselves had been able to preserve detailed tax and financial records during the evacuation process. Thus, it was extremely difficult for claimants to establish that their claims were valid. Under the Act, Japanese-American families filed 26,568 claims totaling \$148 million in requests; about \$37 million was approved and disbursed.<sup>[90]</sup>

[\[edit\]](#)Reparations and redress

See also: [Japanese American redress and court cases](#)

During World War II, [Colorado](#) governor [Ralph Lawrence Carr](#) was the only elected official to publicly apologize for the internment of American citizens. The act cost him reelection, but gained him the gratitude of the Japanese American community, such that a statue of him was erected in Sakura Square in Denver's Japantown.<sup>[91]</sup>

Largely through the efforts of college President William Dennis, [Earlham College](#) instituted a program beginning in 1942 that enrolled several dozen Japanese-American students, in order to spare them from internment. While this action was controversial in [Richmond, Indiana](#), it helped strengthen the college's ties to Japan and the Japanese-American community.<sup>[92]</sup>

Beginning in the 1960s, a younger generation of Japanese Americans who were inspired by the [Civil Rights movement](#) began what is known as the "Redress Movement," an effort to obtain an official apology and reparations from the federal government for interning their parents and grandparents during the war, focusing not on documented property losses but on the broader injustice of the internment. The movement's first success was in 1976, when President [Gerald Ford](#) proclaimed that the internment was "wrong," and a "national mistake" which "shall never again be repeated".<sup>[93]</sup>

The campaign for redress was launched by Japanese Americans in 1978. The [Japanese American Citizens League](#) (JACL) asked for three measures to be taken as redress: \$25,000 to be awarded to each person who was detained, an apology from Congress acknowledging publicly that the U.S. government had been wrong, and the release of funds to set up an educational foundation for the children of Japanese American families.

In 1980, Congress established the [Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians](#) (CWRIC) to study the matter. On February 24, 1983, the commission issued a report entitled *Personal Justice Denied*, condemning the internment as "unjust and motivated by racism rather than real military necessity".<sup>[94]</sup> The Commission recommended that \$20,000 in

reparations be paid to those Japanese Americans who had been victims of internment.



**U.S. President Ronald Reagan signs the [Civil Liberties Act of 1988](#), which granted reparations for the internment of Japanese Americans.**

In 1988, U.S. President [Ronald Reagan](#) signed the [Civil Liberties Act of 1988](#), which had been sponsored by Representative [Norman Mineta](#) and Senator [Alan K. Simpson](#) – the two had met while Mineta was interned at a camp in [Wyoming](#) – which provided redress of \$20,000 for each surviving detainee, totaling \$1.2 billion dollars. The question of to whom reparations should be given, how much, and even whether monetary reparations were appropriate were subjects of sometimes contentious debate.<sup>[95]</sup>

On September 27, 1992, the Civil Liberties Act Amendments of 1992, appropriating an additional \$400 million to ensure all remaining internees received their \$20,000 redress payments, was signed into law by President [George H. W. Bush](#), who also issued another formal apology from the U.S. government on December 7, 1991, on the very day of the 50th-Anniversary of the [Pearl Harbor Attack](#):

*"In remembering, it is important to come to grips with the past. No nation can fully understand itself or find its place in the world if it does not look with clear eyes at all the glories and disgraces of its past. We in the United States acknowledge such an injustice in our history. The internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry was a great injustice, and it will never be repeated."*

Some Japanese and Japanese Americans who were relocated during World War II received compensation for property losses, according to a 1948 law. Congress appropriated \$38 million to meet \$131 million of claims from among 23,000 claimants.<sup>[96]</sup> These payments were disbursed very slowly, the final disbursement occurring in 1965.<sup>[96]</sup> In 1988, following lobbying efforts by Japanese Americans, \$20,000 per internee was paid out to individuals who had been interned or

relocated, including those who chose to return to Japan. These payments were awarded to 82,210 Japanese Americans or their heirs at a cost of \$1.6 billion; the program's final disbursement occurred in 1999.<sup>[13]</sup>

Under the 2001 budget of the United States, it was also decreed that the ten sites on which the detainee camps were set up are to be preserved as historical landmarks: "places like Manzanar, Tule Lake, Heart Mountain, Topaz, Amache, Jerome, and Rohwer will forever stand as reminders that this nation failed in its most sacred duty to protect its citizens against prejudice, greed, and political expediency".<sup>[97]</sup>

On January 30, 2011, California first observed an annual "[Fred Korematsu](#) Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution", the first such commemoration for an [Asian American](#) in the U.S.<sup>[98]</sup> On June 14, 2011, Peruvian president [Alan García](#) apologized for his country's internment of Japanese immigrants during World War II, most of whom were transferred to the United States.<sup>[78]</sup>

[\[edit\]](#)Legal legacy

Grandfather and grandson at Manzanar, July 2, 1942.

Several significant legal decisions arose out of Japanese-American internment, relating to the powers of the government to detain citizens in wartime. Among the cases which reached the Supreme Court were [Yasui v. United States](#) (1943), [Hirabayashi v. United States](#) (1943), *ex parte Endo* (1944), and [Korematsu v. United States](#) (1944).

In *Yasui* and *Hirabayashi* the court upheld the constitutionality of curfews based on Japanese ancestry; in *Korematsu* the court upheld the constitutionality of the exclusion order. In *Endo*, the court accepted a petition for a [writ of habeas corpus](#) and ruled that the WRA had no authority to subject a citizen whose loyalty was acknowledged to its procedures.

Korematsu's and Hirabayashi's convictions were vacated in a series of [coram nobis](#) cases in the early 1980s.<sup>[99]</sup> In the *coram nobis* cases, federal district and appellate courts ruled that newly uncovered evidence revealed an unfairness which, had it been known at the time, would likely have changed the [Supreme Court's](#) decisions in the *Yasui*, *Hirabayashi*, and *Korematsu* cases.<sup>[8][26]</sup> These new court decisions rested on a series of documents recovered from the [National](#)

[Archives](#) showing that the government had altered, suppressed and withheld important and relevant information from the Supreme Court, including the Final Report by General DeWitt justifying the internment program.<sup>[99]</sup> The Army had destroyed documents in an effort to hide the fact that alterations had been made to the report.<sup>[26]</sup> The *coram nobis* cases vacated the convictions of Korematsu and Hirabayashi (Yasui died before his case was heard, rendering it moot), and are regarded as one of the impetuses for the [Civil Liberties Act of 1988](#).<sup>[99]</sup>

The rulings of the US Supreme Court in the Korematsu and Hirabayashi cases, specifically in its expansive interpretation of government powers in wartime, have yet to be overturned. They are still the law of the land because a lower court cannot overturn a ruling by the US Supreme Court. The *coram nobis* cases totally undermined the *factual* underpinnings of the 1944 cases, leaving the original decisions without much logical basis.<sup>[99]</sup> Nonetheless, in light of the fact that these 1944 decisions are still on the books, a number of legal scholars have expressed the opinion that the original Korematsu and Hirabayashi decisions have taken on renewed relevance in the context of the [War on Terror](#).

Former [Supreme Court](#) Justice [Tom C. Clark](#), who represented the US Department of Justice in the "relocation," writes in the epilogue to the 1992 book *Executive Order 9066: The Internment of 110,000 Japanese Americans*:<sup>[100]</sup>

The truth is—as this deplorable experience proves—that constitutions and laws are not sufficient of themselves...Despite the unequivocal language of the [Constitution of the United States](#) that the [writ of habeas corpus](#) shall not be suspended, and despite the Fifth Amendment's command that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, both of these constitutional safeguards were denied by military action under Executive Order 9066.<sup>[101]</sup>

#### [\[edit\]](#) Terminology debate

There has been much discussion over what to call the locations in which internees were held.<sup>[102]</sup> The WRA officially called them "War Relocation Centers." Manzanar, for instance, was officially known as the Manzanar War Relocation Center.

Because of this, the National Park Service has chosen to use "relocation center" in referring to the camps.<sup>[103]</sup> Some historians and scholars, as well as former internees, object to this wording, noting that the internees were literally imprisoned, such that "relocation" becomes a euphemism.<sup>[103]</sup>

Another widely used name for the American camps is "internment camp". This phrase is also potentially misleading, as the [United States Department of Justice](#) operated separate camps that were officially called "internment camps" in which some Japanese Americans were imprisoned during World War II.<sup>[104][105]</sup>

**"Concentration camp" is the most controversial descriptor of the camps. This term is criticized for suggesting that the Japanese American experience was analogous to the [Holocaust](#) and the [Nazi concentration camps](#).**<sup>[106]</sup> For this reason, [National Park Service](#) officials have attempted to avoid the term.<sup>[103]</sup> [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#), [Dwight D. Eisenhower](#) and Secretary of the Interior [Harold L. Ickes](#) each referred to the American camps as "concentration camps," at the time.<sup>[107]</sup> When the nature of the Nazi concentration camps became clear to the world, and the phrase "concentration camp" came to signify a Nazi death camp, most historians turned to other terms to describe Japanese internment.

Recognizing the controversy over the terminology, in 1971, when the [Manzanar Committee](#) applied to the [California Department of Parks and Recreation](#) to have Manzanar designated as a California State Historical Landmark, it was proposed that both "relocation center" and "concentration camp" be used in the wording of the plaque for the landmark.<sup>[108]</sup>

Some Owens Valley residents vehemently opposed the use of "concentration camp," and it took a year of discussion and negotiation before both terms were accepted and included on the plaque.<sup>[102][108]</sup>

#### [\[edit\]](#) Notable internees

**More at:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese\\_American\\_internment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_American_internment)